Approved for Release: 2025/06/25 C06949054

(b)(3)

BABRAK Karmal
(Phonetic: baBRAK)

AFGHANISTAN

President, Revolutionary Council
(since December 1979)

Addressed as:
Mr. President

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Babrak Karmal is the Soviet Union's number-one in Afghanistan. he has only limited popularity among his countrymen. Since being installed as his country's leader after a bloody Soviet-engineered coup in 1979, Babrak has tried to gain legitimacy and international recognition for his government. He has broadened the government's political base by including some military leaders and non-Communists in the Cabinet and the Revolutionary Council (the main executive and quasi-legislative body). his efforts so far have not satisfied the general populace, who oppose Soviet intervention; in the eyes of his own people, as well as of the world in general

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Babrak has been general secretary of the ruling People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) since December 1979. He is a member of the dominant Parcham (Banner) faction. Some members of his government belong to the Khalq (People) faction. The PDPA is a bitterly divided party; and this split, which has led to violent clashes even among senior ministers, has become public knowledge. Babrak has even chastised members of both factions publicly, hoping to eliminate the rivalry and political turmoil the split has caused.

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Communist Connection

Babrak, a longtime Communist, began his leftwing activities in about 1950 as a student at Kabul University. Arrested for leftist agitation on campus, he was jailed during 1952-56. He joined the PDPA when it was formed in 1965. In 1967 the PDPA split over differences in party strategy. Babrak and his followers favored increased political agitation against the monarchy and formed the Parcham faction, while the more cautious members formed the Khalq faction. In 1977 Babrak returned to the party fold and was named its vice chairman.

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When the Communists seized control in April 1978, Babrak became a deputy prime minister and vice chairman of the Revolutionary Council and appeared to be the second most important figure in the regime. In late June and early July, however, he and other leaders of the Parcham faction were exiled. Babrak was sent to Czechoslovakia as

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Ambassador and, after being dismissed in September, remained in Eastern Europe until December 1979. In addition to the presidency, he held the prime ministership until June 1981.

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Career and Personal Data

In 1949 Babrak entered the Law Faculty at Kabul University. After his release from jail in 1956, he received a law degree and served in the Army for a year. From 1958 until 1965 he was a minor official in the Planning Ministry. In 1965 Babrak won a seat in Parliament, where he displayed his skills as an orator and political tactician. He was defeated in 1966 but regained his seat in 1969. His career in Parliament ended in 1973, when the legislature was dissolved. Babrak then remained out of the public eye until 1978.

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ambitious, intelligent, and affable. he is an excellent speaker, although he tends to dominate a conversation. He speaks several Afghan dialects, English, and some German. He has traveled to most of the East European countries and to Mongolia on state visits. He often visits Moscow for consultations as well as for vacations Babrak, who is about 54, is married and has several children.

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Babrak comes from a prominent family in Pushtunistan (he may be related to the late President Mohammad Daoud). His father was an important general until the monarchy was overthrown in 1953 Babrak has five brothers, one of whom is a high-ranking member of the PDPA

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